

Media Release
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Blueprint Outlines Key EPA Objectives

The Board of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) of Tasmania will hold an annual roundtable of key stakeholders to discuss strategic and emerging environmental issues.

Chair of the EPA Board John Ramsay said that's just one of several key initiatives outlined in the Board's inaugural statement of intent.

'The statement of intent is the blueprint for the Board's objectives over the next few years,' Mr Ramsay said.

Under the statement of intent, the EPA Board has also announced it will:

- Develop its first strategic plan by May 2009;
- Develop a policy to assist receiving representations from the public on strategic environmental issues;
- Identify current best practice in addressing climate change and sustainability through environmental assessment, permits and other regulatory processes and
- Identify opportunities for promoting sustainability.

'One way we seek to do this is by meeting the Tasmanian Office of Climate Change as a matter of priority to clearly define the role of the EPA in relation to climate change issue and develop a cooperative partnership with the TCCO,' Mr Ramsay said.

The EPA has also developed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Forest Practices Authority (FPA) to clarify roles and responsibilities.

Other goals for the EPA Board include providing input to the review of the State Policy on Water Quality Management and, playing a role in implementing the government's Waste and Resource Management Strategy.

Mr Ramsay said development of the EPA website, a newsletter and an Annual Report along with strategic sponsorship of events will all be part of promotion to improve awareness of the Board and its roles.

“The Board is taking a broad consultative process in relation to its strategic plan and as such expects to have the plan completed by the end of May this year,” Mr Ramsay said.

The statement of intent covers the period October 2008 through to March 2010 and is the Board’s response to the statement of expectation issued by the Minister for Environment, Parks, Heritage and the Arts Michelle O’Byrne in October last year.

Under the *Environment Management and Pollution Control Act*, the Minister is required to provide a statement of expectation to the EPA every two years.

Mr Ramsay said it was important to note the issues addressed by the Board were not limited to those listed in the statement of expectation and added that the Minister’s statement of expectation cannot operate to prevent the Board from independently performing its statutory functions.

Background

The EPA is a part of Tasmania’s Resource Management and Planning System and its jurisdiction includes environmental management and pollution control matters. The EPA is governed by an independent Board and Director. Both the Chair and Director discharge their responsibilities at arm’s length from State Government and have independent statutory powers under the Act.

The statement of intent is available for public viewing on the EPA website: www.epa.tas.gov.au

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